

ORIGIN IIP-00

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	CCOE-00	DIM-00	ANHR-00	WHA-00	PDI-00	MEDE-00	EAP-00
	EUR-00	UTED-00	VCI-00	FSI-00	OBO-00	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	MMP-00	MOFM-00	MOF-00	CDC-00	VCIE-00	NEA-00
	NSAE-00	ISN-00	NSCE-00	OIC-00	OIG-00	NIMA-00	OPR-00
	PA-00	PER-00	PM-00	GIWI-00	SCT-00	ISNE-00	IRM-00
	SSO-00	SS-00	MR-00	CRYE-00	FMP-00	BBG-00	R-00
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TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS COLLECTIVE
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ECPS](#) [KPAO](#) [OIIP](#)
SUBJECT: LEVERAGING MOBILE TECHNOLOGY FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

1. SUMMARY: Mobile technology is a rich field for developing new public diplomacy tools to understand, engage, inform, and persuade overseas audiences. On February 19th, the Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) and FSI brought together industry leaders and PD practitioners for a one-day conference on "Leveraging Mobile Technology for Public Diplomacy." Some new ideas and opportunities identified at the conference follow below for posts to consider pursuing. Posts are encouraged to report effective approaches to using mobile technology for PD purposes. End Summary.

2. IIP and an increasing number of overseas posts have already experimented in an ad hoc way with SMS, Twitter, games delivered via cell phones, and other new mobile technologies designed to reach key overseas audiences. IIP organized this conference to bring in private sector experts to educate on the current state of mobile technology and to seek their ideas for further collaboration on developing new mobile tools for PD outreach. This was the first time the Department has devoted an all-day conference to an examination of the potential of mobile technology and its implications for public diplomacy. This initiative reflected increased attention Department-wide to the implications for American diplomacy of new communications technologies (see, for example, the recent cable on social media and the use of diplomacy, State 16064, and the following blog post by an outside speaker at the conference: <http://www.ipdi.org/blog/index.php/2009/02/20/why-the-state-department-gets-it/>).

3. Academics and industry experts, including a Vice-President of Nokia and the coordinator of text messaging for the Obama 2008 presidential campaign, discussed how mobile phones are rapidly advancing from their origins as voice communication devices into their new status as multi-function tools with diverse capabilities offering Internet access, video, music, text, social networking, trade and finance information, global position system (GPS) tracking, and education. Speakers addressed the rapidly changing communication behaviors among consumers; the use of mobile devices in low technology areas; implications of mobile use in politically repressive environments; and the need to address audience segmentation in developing mobile strategies.

4. In breakout sessions, public diplomacy colleagues from ECA and other bureaus and the industry experts developed specific recommendations for using mobile technology in different environments, building on initiatives already

under way at a number of posts. IIP and ECA will be exploring how to develop new PD mobile tools to help:

- ¶A. Use SMS to motivate audience participation in PD programs;
- ¶B. Develop broader information-sharing networks with journalists and media professionals;
- ¶C. Expand opportunities for mobile English-teaching and outreach;
- ¶D. Integrate mobile technology into PD use of other platforms, such as social networking;
- ¶E. Adapt current State Department and Embassy websites to effectively access mobile platforms; and
- ¶F. Use mobile communications to reach audiences without regular Internet access.

¶5. Throughout the conference, it was evident that mobile technologies have limited utility for some types of public diplomacy activities. For example, mobile communication does not lend itself to robust policy advocacy or engaging audiences on topics that involve nuanced understandings and explanation. However, post's assessment of host country audiences and their creative use of new technology may offer many new opportunities to reach heretofore untapped audiences at modest cost and without significant new expenditures of time or personnel resources.

¶6. A more comprehensive report of conference recommendations will be posted on INFOCENTRAL by March 7. As a follow-up, IIP will work with regional bureaus to develop pilot projects and put together new mobile tools for overseas posts. At the same time, IIP welcomes reports from posts on innovative and effective uses of mobile technology to achieve public diplomacy objectives. Please send such reports to IIP/P with a copy to your regional bureau PD office.

¶7. Minimize considered.
CLINTON